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Economic and Social Council

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Organizational session for 1991

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1ST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 30 January 1991, at 3 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

President: Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the organizational session of the Economic and Social Council for 1991 open.

Speaking as the outgoing President, he observed that, unlike the previous session, held in the glow of East-West détente and the promise of greater international co-operation, as had been underscored by the consensus reached at the special session devoted to international economic co-operation, the current session was being opened at a time when the situation in the Gulf was casting a shadow over the world. The events currently unfolding would make the task of addressing the challenges before the Council increasingly difficult and the reorganization of its work all the more urgent. In that regard, he recalled the suggestions that he had made in July 1990 concerning, inter alia, the need for greater participation by heads of executive agencies, ministerial-level participation in the meetings of the Council, convening the Third Committee of the Council during the first regular session as well, and updating the rules of procedure.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT informed the members of the Council that the Group of African States had endorsed the candidacy of Mr. Djoudi (Algeria) for the post of President of the Council for 1991.

Mr. Djoudi (Algeria) was elected President by acclamation.

Mr. Djoudi (Algeria) took the Chair.

The PRESIDENT said that the session of the Council was being opened at a time marked by apprehension. The war which had inflamed the region of the Gulf was a challenge to the United Nations in its role of promoting peace, dialogue and co-operation. Its immediate causes and deep-rooted determining factors underscored the historic injustice of which the Palestinian people, deprived of their land and most basic rights, were still the victims. That conflict clearly demonstrated that security could not be divisible or partial and that the need for equitable

(The President)

development, in which the developing countries must constitute a major focal point, could not be ignored any longer without irremediable consequences.

In order to make an effective contribution to the indispensable work of promoting renewed international co-operation, the United Nations should continue its efforts to adapt the Organization's intergovernmental machinery to economic growth needs on the basis of equity and to revitalize the Economic and Social Council. In that regard, it was necessary to underscore the importance of the special ministerial-level meeting of the Council to be held on 4 and 5 July 1991 in order to evaluate the impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the world economy and, in particular, on the economic growth and development of the developing countries. In view of its thematic nature and level of representation, that meeting was likely to mark the beginning of a new tradition in the work of the Council.

In accordance with rule 18 of its rules of procedure, the Council was required to elect four Vice-Presidents. He had been informed that, following informal consultations within the regional groups, the following candidates had been nominated: Mr. Silovic (Yugoslavia), Mr. Somavia (Chile), Mr. Eliasson (Sweden) and Mr. Razali (Malaysia).

Mr. Silovic (Yugoslavia), Mr. Somavia (Chile), Mr. Eliasson (Sweden) and Mr. Razali (Malaysia) were elected Vice-Presidents of the Council for 1991 by acclamation.

Mr. AWOONOR (Observer for Ghana), speaking as Chairman of the Group of 77, said that at its second regular session in 1991, the Council would have before it, inter alia, the important conclusions and recommendations set forth in the report of the South Commission, which should be given very careful consideration. Furthermore, the Group of 77 was prepared to engage in constructive dialogue with all delegations on the question of revitalizing the Council in order to make more effective use of United Nations resources in the economic and social field. Lastly, he wished to assure the Council and its President of his total support in carrying out their work.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT said that, on the basis of the guidelines set forth in its resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114, the Council would be considering the provisional agenda for the organizational session (E/1991/2) and a note by the Secretary-General containing the proposed basic programme of work for 1991 and 1992 (E/1991/1 and Add.1).

The Council's attention was also drawn to the matters requiring action at its organizational session, listed under item 2 of the provisional agenda. In accordance with paragraph 2 (1) of Council resolution 1988/77, it was his intention to hold, between 30 January and 5 February, consultations, as appropriate, with members of the Bureau and the Council on the proposed basic programme of work and other organizational matters. On the basis of those informal consultations, the Bureau would submit its recommendations on those matters for consideration by the Council at its next meeting. It was hoped that such a procedure would enable the Council to shorten its organizational session, which was scheduled to be held from 5 to 8 February 1991.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.